

Story 1802 (1989 Tape 7)

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Location: Konya, capital city
of Konya Province

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Special Butter for the Troops

During the War of Independence the Turkish army did not have regular sources of food supplies. All of the citizens were called upon to provide whatever supplies they could. At one point in the war it was announced that butter would be collected from all villages for the army.

There was one village in this area whose muhtar¹ was angry at the people in his village. He decided to take vengeance against them by making them work harder to prepare their contribution of butter for the army. Going to the authorities in the kaza town, he asked, "Do you want unstrained butter or strained butter for the army?"

"Which is better?" they asked him.

"Oh, strained butter is much better," he said.

"Then let us have strained butter," they said.

¹The muhtar is the head man in a village or city ward. He is elected to his position. He is the only elected official that some villagers ever see, for most government officials in rural areas are appointees of one or another cabinet ministry.

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Straining butter is a difficult and time-consuming process, and of course the muhtar knew this. He was very pleased to be able to return to the people of his village and announce, "They want strained butter!"